

NEWS RELEASE

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Three Chicago Men Sentenced to Prison Terms for Debit Card Fraud Conspiracy

Urbana, IL - Three Chicago men have been sentenced to prison terms for conspiring to defraud Bank One, now known as J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, in an ATM debit card scheme, as announced by Rodger A. Heaton, United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois. Chief U.S. District Judge Michael P. McCuskey sentenced the third defendant, Jon Walker, age 22, today, to a term of 18 months in federal prison. The leader of the conspiracy, Eddie Mathews, age 23, also known as "Sko," was sentenced on September 18, 2006, to serve 27 months in prison. Also on September 18, 2006, co-conspirator Martez Malone, age 22, a/k/a "Tez," was ordered to serve 24 months in prison for his role as a conspiracy manager. The three were ordered to pay jointly and severally \$33,588.82 in restitution to Bank One.

The defendants pled guilty to using ATM debit cards to deposit bad checks, then making purchases or using ATM cards to withdraw money from the accounts into which they had deposited the counterfeit checks. The defendants obtained debit cards and pin numbers from students at the University of Illinois and Parkland College in Urbana-Champaign, promising student card holders that they would receive a "fee" for allowing the defendants to use their cards and pin numbers. All total, the defendants were sentenced for causing a bank loss of \$105,203.

The case was investigated by the University of Illinois Police and the United States Secret Service. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Hilary W. Frooman.

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